



SOCIAL STUDIES

Lesson

Lesson

4

UNIT 6 – History of the Caribbean Family

The 21st Century – The Changing Roles of the Family as an Institution

INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, family no longer serves as the main provider of childcare, affection, socialisation, education, etc. as these are provided by alternative institutions. There are several reasons why the family no longer serves all the needs of individuals. In this regard agencies have been set up to compensate where the family has fallen short.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson you will be able to:

Compare the changing roles and functions of the family in the 21st century



ACTIVITY 1

Make a list of all the things your family provides for you. You would have examined these in previous lessons.

Examining the list very closely can you see areas where you have gained the assistance of others, for example affection, have you ever depended on someone outside of your family to show you love through kindness and respect?

LESSON

In some way or the other all persons look to others to provide something the family should be responsible for. Today agencies and programmes have been set up to provide basic needs of individuals. This has become necessary as there are growing cases of neglect and abandonment in families. These agencies are both government agencies and non-governmental bodies. Can you think of any such agency or programme?

Let us look at all the things on your list of family provisions and see if we can outline alternative sources.

1. Childcare – Families were at one time the primary provider of care in the home until the child was approximately five years old and ready for primary education. This was because mothers usually stayed at home and nurtured the children. Today women have joined the labour force and children are placed in day cares and pre-schools.

2. Affection – Parents were once the only ones who taught individuals the love of a family. They would do this through positive actions and even by saying “I love you”. Today children are forced to look elsewhere for the love and attention they deserve. Children’s homes and other organisations provide this for those who do not receive it at home.

3. Socialisation – Children depended on siblings and other family members to teach them how to interact with others. During slavery and indentureship when schooling was almost not heard of children were never socialized outside of the family or the fields. Today children learn socialisation skills in school, at church, or in various extra and co-curricular activities.

4. Education – Going to school was part of normal life for most West Indian children between 1838 and 1938. But a very large number did not go to school at all, and of the majority who did, very many attended irregularly for only a few years. Very few children reached the highest forms of the primary schools. Parents did not want to send their children to school, to become corrupt by other cultures, to miss work and an income for the family. Today schools come in all varieties, denominational, government, private etc. Parents have changed and time has allowed them to be more open to the idea of education.



ACTIVITY 2

Make a list now of some organisations or agencies set up to provide needs which the family alone once provided e. g Social-welfare of Trinidad and Tobago for some economic assistance

CONCLUSION

Over time, many things have changed for the family. While at one time the family was at the centre of all the needs and wants of the individual fulfilling all responsibilities this has changed. Society has recognized with changes in technology and the structure of families all the responsibilities cannot be met.

1. Women are now working
2. Single-parent families are rampant
3. New legislation has outlawed child labour, etc.